The Duel on Funashima Island

This statue commemorates a duel that took place on April 13, 1612, on Funashima Island, Japan between Sasaki Kojiro "Ganryu" and Miyamoto Musashi. Kojiro was a retainer to the Hosokawa clan, while Musashi was still a "Ronin" a masterless samurai. The duel had been arranged by another Hosokawa general, Nagaoka Sado, upon Musashi's formal request. Hosokawa Tadaoki agreed and the choosen place was a little island in the Kamon strait, between Honshu and Kyushu. The Hosokawa found an isolated place suitable for the duel because, if Sasaki Kojiro won, they could avoid any possible revenge from Musashi's followers. The day of the duel, Nagaoka Sado, lord Hosokawa Tadaoki himself and many men accompained Kojiro to Funashima, while Musashi traveled alone in a boat alone except for the boatman.

Kojiro was famous for his legendary speed with the sword. His favourite sword was a nodachi, a long sword (90 cm) he called Monohoshi Zao ("Drying Pole"). It's said that he was able to draw his katana out of the scabbard, execute his most famed technique, "tsubame gaeshi", and return the sword to the scabbard in the blink of an eye

Musashi, was a master of strategy and knowing of Kojiro's pride in his sword, carved a bokken (wooden sword) from the boat's spare oar during the trip to the island. In order to further unnerve his opponent Musashi kept Kojiro waiting for three hours before he arrived at the island.

The duel didn't last too long. Kojiro, impatient from waiting so long, unsheathed his sword and tossed his scabbard aside. Musashi faced Kojiro with his carved bokken and said "You won't need that anymore, you have already lost". After facing each other unmoving for a very long time, then Musashi moved to position himself so the sun was at his back and in Kojiro's eyes. This resulted in a brief burst of swordplay in which Kojiro cut Musashi's headband off , and Musashi hit Kojiro with his makeshift bokken and cracked his skull.

Share this:

Twitter Facebook

Like

Be the first to like this.

Related

Put a Lid on it!
July 1, 2012
In "Bokken"

A Samurai's Creed
July 10, 2012
In "Miyamoto Musashi"

The Essence of Swordsmanship
July 1, 2012
In "Fudo Myo-o"

July 10, 2012
Categories: Bokken, Miyamoto Musashi, Samurai, Samurai Tale, Strategy . . Author: samuraifitnessmaine

Leave a comment

No comments yet.

Comments RSS TrackBack Identifier URI

Leave a Reply

Enter your comment here...

Test Cutting – How a Swordsman keeps his Edge